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THE

VIRGINIA LICHTENSTEINS

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HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

BY

GASTON LICHTENSTEIN

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LEIB LICHTENSTEIN AND FAMILY.

Introductory.

The Virginia branches of the Lichtenstein family are descended from Leib Lichtenstein, who lived at Fordon during the latter half of the eighteenth and somewhat more than the first half of the nineteenth century. Whether he was born in this small town is a question. The first reference to Jewish inhabitants of the place occurs during the year 1633.

At that time Northern Europe was in turmoil, owing to the Thirty Years' War. The Catholics and Protestants were engaged in a bitter struggle. Jewish residents of the affected districts had the poor satisfaction of seeing that they did not suffer alone. But, their persecution was such as to cause removals from one locality to another.

Many German Jews settled in Poland on account of better conditions. When Prussia, Russia, and Austria divided the country in their greed for more territory, that portion west of the Vistula finally became a part of Prussia. A multitude of people from this section have settled in America from time to time, and have become factors in communities all over the United States.

Fordon is on the Vistula, the largest stream in this region. Jewish children were, therefore, enabled to enjoy the delights of a nearby river and availed themselves of the opportunity. The grandfather of the writer used to speak often of his experiences, how he loved to play near the water and would wonder that he did not lose his life as he was so reckless. "Boys will be boys" all over the world.

The city of Bromberg lies about ten English miles away and the young people used to make excursions to the big town. Before railroads existed, these pleasure parties must have been especially enjoyable. An iron way now links the two communities and romance has departed. These old-time delights are not generally known to the present generation and the writer sets them down, while their memory is not faded.

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Leib and Pearl.

Tradition says that Leib Lichtenstein lived to about the age of one hundred. If this be accurate, he was born at the time when Prince Kaunitz, of Austria, arrayed the Powers of Europe against Frederick the Great. That he attained a great age admits of no doubt. A native of Fordon is authority for the statement that, during his latter years, he was the most venerated member of his congregation and occupied a seat next to the rabbi.

Leib's wife, Pearl, also reached an unusual age. One, who knew her, said that her hair was black despite the length of years. She had a happy disposition and showed more joy than the younger generations did. A family tradition may explain her sunny disposition, as well as her recognized piety. At an early age, being the only child left of a large family, she made a vow to fast every Thursday and attend divine services faithfully if God would spare her and her own children.

Ten boys and three girls, ancestors of numerous ramifications both in Europe and America, shows that the Almighty was kind. HIS mercy has extended far beyond the imagination of the good old lady. She saw her children grow up and lived to see her older grandchildren married. One son attained success in England. The oldest, Hirsch Meyer, apparently led an uneventful life. Of the other sons, only two will receive consideration in this genealogy. They are Lewis and Simon, heads of the Virginia Lichtensteins.

Their Three Daughters.

But, first, the three daughters deserve a few words. One was the mother of Simon Lesser, a prominent citizen of Augusta, Georgia. He married Annie Rintels and had three children: Roselle, Herbert, and Adolph. Roselle lived to the age of twenty-six. She left a baby and a young husband to mourn her loss. Herbert lives in Kentucky where he has married.

Another daughter of Leib and Pearl Lichtenstein married at Fordon. She was the mother of Lena, wife of Isaac Michael. Ten children were born to Lena and Isaac Michael, one of whom, William, married Noma Arnheim, of North Carolina. During the Spanish-American War, he served as Corporal in Company I, of the 2d North Carolina Volunteers. The couple now resides in Richmond. William H. Michael was born on August 19th, 1871. Bettie, the youngest daughter of the founder of the Lichtenstein family, married Morris Dobrin (Dublin) and went to Vancouver. The number of their descendants has not been ascertained.

THE VIRGINIA BRANCHES.

Lewis's Family.

Lewis, next to the youngest of the brothers, was born on January 17th, 1825, and lived until 1883. He entered the Prussian army, and after a term of service, received an honorable discharge at Thorn. This occurred in December, 1847. For his energy, America offered an attractive field. His exact arrival in Richmond cannot be determined, but the date of his marriage settles the fact that it must have been during his early twenties. Reverend Max J. Michelbacher married him to Caroline Engel on the 12th of November, 1851.

He made quite a success as a merchant and was one of the pioneers in the seine thread industry, in Virginia. His sons took up the work where he left off and the name of L. Lichtenstein has spread over a large territory where the children and grandchildren of the first friends of the concern live. The old generation soon became convinced of the firm's honorable dealing and transmitted its reputation to their descendants.

Isaac.

Lewis and Caroline had several children, of whom three only survive: Isaac, Jacob, and Rosa. Isaac, born June 19, 1856, married Carrie Frank, of New York City. The two sons of this union are: Lewis and Valentine. Lewis, born June 19th, 1887, graduated with distinction from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, 1907. Valentine, the second son, was born February 6th, 1890. He graduated from Stevens Institute of Technology, at Hoboken, 1911. While at this institution, he took an interest in the student life. He was a member of the Mandolin Club and vice-president of the Chess Club. Out of a graduating class of seventy, Valentine ranked among the first ten honor men.

Jacob and Rosa.

Jacob, born July 21, 1857, lives in a state of single blessedness. Rosa, born July 7th, 1867, married Lewis Strauss who formerly lived in West Virginia, but now makes his home at Richmond. They have two boys: Lewis and Morris. Lewis was born on January 31st, 1896; and, Morris, on August 4th, 1897. Rosa, daughter of Lewis and Caroline, attended Richmond Female Institute, now called Woman's College.

Simon's Family; His First Wife, Fannie, and Her Son, Isadore.

Simon, a son of Leib and Pearl, saw the light of day at Pordon, May 18th, 1812. He was, therefore, several years older than his brother, Lewis. At the time of his birth Napoleon Bonaparte's name had made a deep impression upon the inhabitants of the locality. The stories, told him during childhood, must have dealt to a great extent with the doings of the Conqueror. Reference has already been made to his great delight in playing along the banks of the Vistula.

He married twice. His first wife, Fannie Schultz, had a number of children. Isadore alone survived childhood. His step-mother brought him to Richmond in 1850. When the War Between the States divided the Union, Isadore enlisted in the first Virginia Infantry. His Company (H), called the Second Richmond Grays, was organized April, 1861. After a short term in the field, he returned to the Confederate capital. While employed at Richmond, he married Martha Elizabeth Harmon during July, 1862. After the War, when a readjustment of conditions was in progress, he travelled through the South as salesman for a Virginia enterprise. In 1867, he unfortunately entered Texas on a business trip. An epidemic caused him to be detained at Galveston. The authorities would not let him leave the city. As a result, yellow fever laid its fatal hand upon him.

Flora, the only child of Isadore and Martha Elizabeth (Harmon), was born June 7th, 1863. She married Gerald

Barry Gilbert on March 27th, 1834. The issue of this union was one son, who died at the age of seventeen. A number of years ago, they moved North. At present, the couple lives in Massachusetts. From their home at Winthrop, they can enjoy gazing out upon the broad Atlantic.

Rebecca's Children.

Simon came to America in 1848, when all Europe was stirred with revolutionary sentiment. A few years before, he had married Rebecca, younger sister of his first wife. Two years after he settled in Richmond, Rebecca took Isadore and her own three children away from quiet surroundings, to brave the perils of the sea. In those days, voyages did not furnish the delights of the present time. The ship was caught in a storm, which stirred the passengers very much. Whether due to this, or the long ocean trip, the three babies succumbed within one week. Isadore, the step child, survived. He was brought to his father and comforted his parent until the arrival of the following children: Sarah, Hannah, David, Moses, Joseph, Fannie and Dora, natives of Richmond.

At the outbreak of War in 1861, Simon had almost reached the half century mark. Having led a sedentary life, active service was well nigh impossible. He had a large family to support but did not hesitate to put a large share of his income in Confederate bonds. When the Yankees took Richmond, he burnt up a trunk full of papers of various sorts. Fortunately, his wife had the foresight to save an amount of silver and gold, sufficient to tide them over a trying period.

It is interesting to note how Rebecca thought of her children's welfare, when the Northern soldiers entered the town. She did not know what was going to happen during the excitement. Each child was provided with a small bag of silver, which the loving mother tied about the neck and told was for the purpose of buying bread, if the family should be separated.

Sarah and Hannah, the older daughters, used to visit the two hospitals near their home. Every afternoon, just as soon as they came from school, their mother would send some things by them to the sick and wounded soldiers. Doctors showed the girls the elements of nursing and they would stay for hours, alleviating the suffering of the unfortunates. Fanning the soldiers and dropping water upon their wounds occupied their play time many a day. Once, while Sarah was fanning a poor fellow, he gasped and died. She fainted and fell across the bed. In all these succeeding years, nothing has affected her thus. It was the only time she ever fainted, although she has experienced her share of grief.

Sarah.

Sarah, daughter of Simon and Rebecca, was born on December 9th, 1851. She married Henry Morris and went to Tarboro, North Carolina. Her knowledge of the family is more comprehensive than that of any other member and the writer takes this opportunity of expressing his appreciation of her help. "Aunt Sarah" (as the author calls her) has been his mainstay, despite the fact that several descendants have contributed valuable data. She now lives at Wilson, North Carolina. Her children are: Pearl, Aaron, Mary (Mamie), Isadore, Simona and Mabel.

Pearl, eldest child of Sarah and Henry Morris, was born on December 18th, 1871. She attended the Richmond Female Institute, now Woman's College. She was married at Tarboro, North Carolina, to Michael David Kaufman, but lives in Norfolk, Virginia. Her three children are: Henrietta Spagat, born May 7th, 1896; Henry Morris, born August 11th, 1897; and, Michael David, Junior, born June 21st, 1907.

Aaron, second child of Sarah and Henry Morris, was born at Tarboro, January 5th, 1875. He lives in Jacksonville, Florida, and holds a responsible position in a large firm. He married Fannie Kronheimer, of Oxford, North Carolina, and has one daughter, "Lonie." Leonora Kronheimer, child of Aaron and Fannie, was born February 15th, 1903.

Mamie, daughter of Sarah and Henry Morris, was born June 21st, 1877. She lives at Wilson, North Carolina, which is the business headquarters of her husband. She married William Teiser (who will receive special notice in a succeeding paragraph), and has three children: Rebecca, born December 13th, 1900; Pearl, born April 11th, 1904; and Theresa, born June 8th, 1906.

Isadore, fourth child of Sarah and Henry Morris, was born April 22d, 1882. He married Lottie Mayo, of Washington, North Carolina, and lives at Texarkana. Simona, born June 22d, 1885, begins the list of grandchildren named for the head of the Lichenstein branch to which she belongs. Her husband is Moses Heilbroner, of Tarboro. Mabel, youngest daughter of Sarah and Henry Morris, was born at Tarboro on December 17th 1887.

Hannah.

Hannah, the second American child of Simon and Rebecca, was born March 4th, 1853. She married Gustav Teiser and had the following children: Theresa, William, Dora, Julian and Lester. "Aunt" Hannah has partaken of the goodness in the world. The writer would be recreant to his trust if he did not pay a deserved tribute to an unselfish life. Her name will be written in kindness, love, and mercy upon the hearts of those who have come in contact with her.

Theresa, the eldest child, was born February 20th, 1871. She married Myer Morris, now of St. Louis, and has three children: Julia, born June 16th, 1901; John William, born September 30th, 1903; and, Hannah, born October 12th, 1907. William, son of Hannah and Gustav Teiser, was born November 13th, 1872. He married Mamie, second daughter of Sarah and Henry Morris. William has demonstrated real ability as a chess player; however, his talent along another line is more marked. As an artist, he has produced work of such merit that he would win recognition thereof, if Wilson possessed the stimulating advantages of an art center.

Dora, third child of Hannah and Gustav Teiser, was born September 24th, 1875, and died January 28th, 1908. She married Moses Heilbroner, of Tarboro, and was the mother of three children: Rebecca (Reba), born September 1st, 1898; Louise, born 20th of June, 1901; and, Moses Julian, born December 8th, 1907.

Julian, born March 26th, 1878, is engaged in business at St. Louis.

Lester, fifth child of Hannah and Gustav Teiser, also lives in the Missouri metropolis. He married Fannie Ettman of that city. Lester was born on December 2d, 1882.

David.

David, oldest male representative of the Virginia branches, left his native city Richmond, when he was yet in his teens. He first went to Tarboro in 1869 but remained only a short while. Three years later, he located there permanently. During the War Between the States, young David spent his time at the capital of the Confederacy. Being a mere child, he could not participate in any capacity. Born on the 18th of November, 1854, his recollections of the great struggle are seen through boyish eyes. Of the fruits of Reconstruction days in North Carolina, however, he has a clear idea.

At the county seat of Edgecombe, he established in the early 70's the well-known grocery business of D. Lichtenstein (now styled the D. Lichtenstein Co., Inc.), and built up from a small beginning the present firm. He married Hannah Zander and is blessed with seven children: Gaston, Leigh, Alfred Baker, Simon, Gertrude, Ira Julian and David.

In August, 1903, he retired from active management of the grocery business and returned to Richmond, his old home. Since the summer of 1909, his address has been New York City. During his long residence in Tarboro, David became identified with the life of the community. He held many positions, some of which follow: member of the Public School Board, member of the Board of Public Works, and Town Alderman.

Gaston, the oldest child of David and Hannah (Zander), went to Richmond with his parents in 1903, and has resided there up to the present time. He is a Tarheel by birth and continues to love the Old North State, although Virginia may claim him now as a citizen. He was born at Tarboro, December 17th, 1879. Gaston spent four years and a half at the Tarboro Male Academy. He regards this time, under the guidance of Frank S. Wilkinson, as the foundation of his success in scholastic life. "Old Frank," as a preparatory teacher, had few equals.

In June, 1897, Gaston graduated from Hughes High School at Cincinnati. He entered the Ohio institution in September, 1895, and, as a result of excellent preparation, "skipped" (to employ school-boy parlance) two classes and graduated with especially good marks in Latin, Greek, and History. He attended the University of Cincinnati, 1897-1900. While at these secular institutions, he also took a course at the Hebrew Union College, receiving the Degree of Bachelor of Hebrew Literature, in 1899.

His first newspaper experience was with the Tarboro Southerner. From time to time, he served in a reportorial capacity and even had the satisfaction of writing all the local matter, during short absences of the editor, Frank Powell. Since changing his address to Richmond, Gaston has written forty odd articles for the Southerner, dealing with the early history of Edgecombe County and the Town of Tarboro; concerning his travels; and, touching upon miscellaneous matters.

He was Associate Editor of and special contributor to the Jewish Record, published at Richmond, 1909-10. Three of his articles have appeared in the North Carolina Review, one entitled "Edgecombe and the Revolution," being a paper prepared for and read before the State Convention of the Daughters of the American Revolution, held during November, 1911. Gaston is the author of several pamphlets.

Leigh, the second son of David and Hannah (Zander), was a good-natured youngster. He made a number of friends both as boy and man. He served the State in the capacity of soldier, being a member of the Edgecombe Guards for three years. Leigh was born May 26th, 1881. For a while, he was connected with the D. Lichtenstein Co., Inc., but left Tarboro for a different field.

Alfred, third son, is the active representative of the firm, just named. He has entire charge at Tarboro. Alfred was born on the 22d of November, 1882. He married Edna Vivian Bloomberg, of Richmond, and has a daughter, Alice Edith, born June 1st 1906. In addition to succeeding his

father as manager of the well known grocery business, Alfred also had another of his father's honors conferred upon him, Director on the Board of the Pamlico Bank.

Simon, fourth son of David and Hannah (Zander), was born September 19th, 1885. From a Jewish standpoint, superstitious persons may infer sundry results, as this date happened to be the Sabbath and the Day of Atonement. Simon has been fortunate, both in making friends and in his work. He attended Horner Military School at Oxford, North Carolina, 1898-1900. He scored a success as a declaimer at the Commencement of the latter year.

A young gentleman from Oxford recently told the writer that he remembers plainly Simon's opening words, which caught the audience: "Lend me your ears, I will return them Saturday night." Although the smallest boy at Horner's, Simon scored points for his company upon the athletic field as well as upon the stage. In the mile run, he won second place. He is now a travelling representative for the James Lowe Erskine Co., of New York City, and covers New England, eastern Canada, and a considerable part of Europe.

Gertrude daughter of David and Hannah (Zander), lives in New York City. She has an excellent quality to her singing voice, which is being cultivated. She was born December 6th, 1886. Gertrude married Eugene Bloch. Ira Julian, born February 3d, 1889, and David, Junior, born December 9th, 1890, are the fifth and sixth sons of David and Hannah (Zander). They have both won honors as athletes.

Moses.

Moses, son of Simon and Rebecca, was born on April 14th, 1856. He died in Monroe, North Carolina, at the age of forty-eight. Moses had many friends in Union County. He belonged for a term to the State militia and received a lieutenant's commission. For skill as a marksman, he won a fine rifle.

Joseph.

Joseph, born December 25th, 1860, was the son of Simon and Rebecca. Those, who know him, can feel the striking resemblance in disposition to those of his sisters, Sarah and Hannah. His kindness of heart is exceptional. He married Emma Schultz and has three sons and two daughters: Leon, Julián, Pearl, Florence, and Joseph, Jr.

Leon, the oldest, was born on December 19th, 1883, at Yorktown near the scene of the surrender of Cornwallis. Julian, the second son, attended Richmond College and then went to New York City where he studied at Sergeant's American Academy of Dramatic Art. After a practical application of his course, he graduated in 1907. Julian married Esther Tischler, of Norfolk, Virginia. He was born December 22d, 1886.

Pearl, born December 23d, 1888, attended Woman's College. She married Elmer R. Oettinger, of Wilson, North Carolina. Florence, born April 17th, 1893, graduated from the John Marshall High School, at Richmond, 1911. Both sisters have appeared before the public as elocutionists. They possess a decided talent along this line. Joseph, Junior, was born on June 20th, 1895. His swimming is worth of remark.

Fannie.

Fannie, daughter of Simon and Rebecca, was born on the 28th of December 1862. She married Myer Morris. There are two children of this union: Della and Simon. Della, born May 17th, 1883, married Rudolph L. Wise, of St. Louis. They have one child, Virginia A., born May 26th, 1905. Simon, son of Fannie and Myer Morris, was born November 6th, 1885.

Dora.

Dora, the baby of Simon and Rebecca's family, married Morris Jacobs and has one son, Simon, born August 21st, 1888. Her married life was spent at Tarboro. Before leaving for Chicago, her present home, she lived a number of years at Wilson, North Carolina. Dora was born on the 26th of August, 1864, and is, therefore, a child of the Confederate States.

Simon, the husband of Rebecca Schultz, died on April 18th, 1885. He left behind an heritage in his descendants, of which a parent may be proud. They have scattered over the land. The family has taken an active interest in the welfare of many communities. May future generations build wisely upon the firm foundation!

FINIS.

N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA